

REMARKS

Each of claims 2-14, 18-66, 73, and 77-81 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Each of claims 1, 67, 68, 70-72, 74-76, and 85 has been amended for reasons unrelated to patentability, including at least one of: to explicitly present one or more elements implicit in the claim as originally written when viewed in light of the specification thereby not narrowing the scope of the claim, to detect infringement more easily, to enlarge the scope of infringement, to cover different kinds of infringement (direct, indirect, contributory, induced, and/or importation, etc.), to expedite the issuance of a claim of particular current licensing interest, to target the claim to a party currently interested in licensing certain embodiments, to enlarge the royalty base of the claim, to cover a particular product or person in the marketplace, and/or to target the claim to a particular industry.

Claims 1, 15-17, 67-72, 74-76, and 82-88 are now pending in this application. Each of claims 1, 67-70, and 85 are in independent form.

The Blum Patent

The International Preliminary Examination Report (“IPER”) for PCT/US03/31385, of which the present application is a National Stage filing, contends that claims 1-88 of that PCT application lack either novelty or an inventive step based on US Patent No. 6,180,562 (Blum). This contention is respectfully traversed.

Each of independent claims 1, 67-70, and 85 recites “an **internally crosslinked polymer** comprising at least one hydrophobic substituent and at least one hydrophilic substituent.” As recognized in the IPER, Blum does not teach expressly or inherently “an **internally crosslinked polymer** comprising at least one hydrophobic substituent and at least one hydrophilic

substituent.” Thus, each of independent claims 1, 67-70, and 85, and each claim depending therefrom, is allowable over Blum.

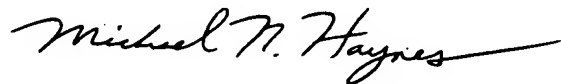
CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the application as amended is in clear condition for allowance. Reconsideration, withdrawal of all grounds of rejection, and issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 50-2504. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 434-972-9988 to discuss any matter regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Haynes PLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael N. Haynes" with a stylized flourish at the end.

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